

Alleged CIA Defector Tells Russia His Story

By BRUCE WINTERS
(Moscow Bureau of The Sun)

Moscow, Oct. 24—A spy thriller entitled, "I Was an Agent for the CIA," began running in a Soviet literary weekly today, allegedly authored by an American defector named John Smith.

It tells of Smith's espionage activities in India for the Central Intelligence Agency and his subsequent disillusionment and decision to become "a citizen of this great and humanitarian country."

A spokesman for the American Embassy here denied any knowledge of John Smith's escapades.

Now Living In Moscow

The first installment of Smith's autobiography was splashed across an inside page of *Literaturnaya Gazeta* and will be followed by other articles in coming weeks.

There was no indication from the article when Smith defected, although it said he now lives and works in Moscow. There also was no hint of why the Smith story was released at this time.

Some Westerners, however, saw a causal link between Smith and the Soviet defector, Lt. Col. Yevgeny Runge, whom the State Department last week said sought political asylum in the United States, bringing with him valuable data on Russian intelligence operations.

Tied To Mrs. Alliluyeva

Tass, the official Soviet news agency, has already branded the American Runge account "as false from beginning to end," denying on behalf of the Government even the existence of a man by that name.

Other observers felt the story was part of an effort to convince Russians that the CIA engineered the defection of Svetlana Alliluyeva earlier this year. At that time, the Soviet Union charged that the CIA not only spirited Stalin's daughter out of India, but also was involved in writing her memoirs.

Today, Tass picked up the literary magazine's Smith story, moving it to subscriber newspapers throughout the country in great detail. Its nation-wide audience was told that Smith now regards the work of the CIA "as devilish and extremely dangerous to world peace."

Smith describes himself as a native of Quincy, Mass., who attended Thayer Academy in Braintree and volunteered for naval duty in 1943. He tells of his wartime activities with the special Navy group engaged in deciphering enemy codes. In 1950, Smith says he was appointed by the State Department to the political section of the United States Embassy in India where he took part in his first major espionage assignment, "Operation Lighter."

The operation was directed against an unnamed developing country of the "third world" that was oriented to the Soviet bloc. With a special miniature camera built into a cigarette lighter, Smith says he photographed a cipher machine in that country's embassy while posing as a repairman, planting a "bug" in the room at the same time.

Salary Raised

So skillfully did he accomplish his mission that Smith said his salary was increased.

He later became heavily involved in CIA operations, Smith said, and according to the Tass account transmitted to Soviet newspapers, "was let into the most sacred thing of espionage—the organizational links of the CIA agents in India."

Together with another embassy official, identified as Pete Peterson, Smith conducted additional secret operations in New Delhi suburbs, including the Indian Air Force experimental station on Gurgaon road.

Smith also claims that Peterson tapped the telephones of Indian military personnel with the help of an undercover agent who worked at the office of the central switchboard.

Smith also alleged that his

wife, Mary London Smith, assisted him and "told about many secret agents of the CIA among the Indian high ranking military."

Tass observed: "When Smith's wife was pregnant, she was much more heavily involved with such assignments [as an agent contact] because the CIA bosses believed that in her condition she was not liable to arouse the suspicions of the Indian security service."

The article did not say whether Mrs. Smith was now with her husband in Moscow.

Smith says he left the Foreign Service when his CIA colleagues began suspecting he was "critically assessing America's state policy." He later lived in Austria and Italy before settling in the Soviet Union.

The Tass account of the Smith story says he "loves the people of America and cannot reconcile himself to the fact that they are so severely fooled and drawn into gambles which may end in the downfall of his homeland."

A John Smith Worked For State Department

Washington, Oct. 24 (AP)—In response to inquiries following Soviet publication of an autobiography of John Smith, a purported CIA defector, the State Department confirmed today that it employed a John Discoe Smith in the Fifties, but disclaimed any knowledge that he has defected to the Soviet Union.

Robert J. McCloskey, State Department press officer, said that Smith, now 41, was a communications clerk with the department from October 29, 1950, to December 29, 1959, when he resigned for "personal reasons."

McCloskey said there is no record that Smith "worked for anyone other than the Department of State as a communications clerk," and "there is no reason to think that he was ever employed by the CIA."

Born In Quincy

Tass, the Soviet news agency, said John Smith spent his first seventeen years in Quincy, Mass., was educated at Thayer Academy in Braintree and worked at "Four Rivers Shipyard" before joining the Navy in World War II.

Relatives of John D. Smith said he attended Quincy schools before dropping out to work at the Fore River Shipyard there. They said he was in the Navy three years and later attended George Washington University, Washington, for two years before joining the State Department.

Unheard From In Years

Mrs. Leonard Kantola, wife of John D. Smith's half-brother, said the family gave a party for Smith in 1951 because he was "going away in the foreign service." Leonard Kantola said he has not heard from Smith in years.

But Smith's mother, Mrs. Thomas Kantola, of Braintree, said of the Russian report: "That's not my boy, he works for the Government, but I can't say any more."

She said she gets "letters from him all the time." And had received one, mailed in Rome, "within a week." She said the letter told that Smith was "traveling in Europe," but she did not know whether it was on a pleasure trip or in connection with his work.

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